

Data Description for Vegetation Survey

General: The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries generated these data by means of seven annual aerial surveys using a helicopter. The helicopter carried as passengers a team of two biologists, one acting as navigator and the other acting as observer/recorder. In cases where the observation required expert interpretation, the record represents a consensus of the two biologists. The helicopter hovered or landed at each station along the north-south transects shown in Map 200211400.pdf, allowing the observer to record the habitat, habitat type, species, and abundance of vegetation. The stations were spaced approximately at half-mile intervals.

Data Column Descriptions:

Transect: Map 200211400.pdf shows these flight lines. The distances of these transects sum to approximately 175 miles.

Station: The sampling stations were identified by marks on an aerial photograph. Stations were spaced approximately at half-mile intervals along each linear transect for a total of 354 stations.

Trans-Stat: This combination of transect and station creates a unique identifier for each location and, by year, for each observation. Given the seven-year duration of the survey, each of the 354 transect-stations yielded seven observations.

Year: The survey included the years 1989-1995. There were 354 observations per year.

Habitat: The habitat codes are listed below:

P	Pond
R	River
D	Ditch
C	Canal
B	Bayou or Lake
M	Marsh
L	Levee

Type: The vegetation marsh type codes are listed below:

F	Fresh water marsh
I	Intermediate marsh
B	Brackish marsh
S	Salt marsh
N	Non-marsh/other
W	Water
U	Unclassified

Species and Cover: These variables report the presence and abundance of 38 plant species, identified by common names and by a numeric code developed by Chabreck and Linscombe. The related document, titled “plant names list.htm”, supplies the scientific names according to these numbers. This list of plant names is based on the taxonomy then current for the Integrated Taxonomic Information System. (Source: Coastal Louisiana Marsh-Vegetation Types, 1997 [Compact Disk] Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Fur and Refuge Division, and the U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division National Wetlands Research Center)

*Sps**: This column gives a numeric code for the plant species observed. The symbol “*” substitutes for an alphabetical species designation between “A” and “LL”. (The survey recorded 38 different plant species.) When a plant species was not observed at a given transect-station in a yearly survey, the column contains a zero.

*Sps*_name*: This column gives the common name for the species indicated in the adjacent column. Again, the symbol “*” is an alphabetical designation for species ranging from “A” to “LL”. (The survey recorded 38 different plant species.) This column is blank whenever a plant species was not observed at a given transect-station in a given year.

*Sps*_ab*: This column reports the percent abundance of the plant species indicated in the preceding two columns. It reports the percentage of the station area covered by the named species of vegetation.